



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



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GOVERNOR

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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 17, 2008

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Administrators
Secondary School Principals

FROM: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer,
Michigan Department of Education (MDE) *Sally*

Margaret M. Ropp, Ph.D., Director, Center for Educational Performance and
Information (CEPI) *mmr*

SUBJECT: Graduation/Dropout Review and Comment Application Release -
January 5, 2009 (GAD Memo #1)

This letter provides critical information about preparing to meet the new U.S. Education Department's regulations for cohort graduation rate calculations when the Graduation and Dropout (GAD) Application is released on **January 5, 2009**. Your district's GAD authorized users will be able to review their 2008 cohort of students and make requests for minimal changes to the data through **February 6, 2009**. **This will be your only opportunity to review and appeal your graduation rate data.** The following deadlines and actions should be followed to prepare for and complete your GAD review.

By December 31, 2008, you should:

1. Identify your district's GAD authorized user. At least one individual responsible for accessing the application should be appointed. To access the GAD, a security agreement (at www.michigan.gov/cepi) must be completed and faxed to CEPI customer support. Further documentation pertaining to GAD will be sent to district authorized users. All auditors with the Single Record Student Database (SRSD) authorization were automatically granted access to the GAD. If you require additional auditor access, the security agreement must be completed.
2. Review documentation on the graduation cohort and rate calculation process at www.michigan.gov/cepi (click on "Four-Year Cohort Graduation and Dropout Rates" on the right-hand Quick Links navigation bar).

Between January 5 – January 23, authorized users should:

3. Review data submitted previously via the SRSD.
4. Assemble documentation required to request data adjustments.

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5. Complete requests to link Unique Identification Codes (UICs) and to change the accountable entity (accountability re-point) via the GAD Application.

Between January 5 – February 6, users should:

6. Complete requests to change exit status, and/or cohort year for student records via the GAD Application.

After January 23, 2009, the application will no longer accept UIC linking or accountability re-point requests. After February 6, 2009, the application will be closed to district users, but remain open to Intermediate School District auditors through March 6, 2009, for their review and approval/denial of these requests. After March 6, 2009, CEPI will calculate the building and district graduation rates and make them available via the GAD Application.

GAD authorized users can still request year changes. A year change is only to be used when data quality issues arise for students who were incorrectly reported and placed into the wrong cohort. A year-change request can move a student into the cohort in which he/she was originally supposed to be placed.

Requests for the 2007 cohort students will be available in the GAD, as a five-year graduation rate will be calculated for this class. Requests for 2007 cohort students will have the same timelines as the 2008 cohort students, and district users will be able to update student records for all 2007 cohort students. Auditors and MDE/CEPI staff will approve or deny these requests as they do the requests for the 2008 cohort.

Please access the following for additional support and information.

1. Guidelines for documentation needed for exit status codes and the ISD auditor role in approving requests to change exit status codes are on the CEPI website.
2. A table with the due dates described above for ISDs, districts, and CEPI, as well as background information and an overview of the impact of new Title I Regulations on the graduation rate, on the CEPI website.
3. A toolkit with talking points, a fact sheet, and frequently asked questions (FAQs) to assist you in communicating internally and externally can be accessed at <http://www.michiganedusource.org/GradRatesToolkit.htm>.
4. A GAD training session will be held on January 14, 2009 at the Michigan Institute for Educational Management (MIEM) conference.
5. Other support materials will continually be posted on the CEPI website, including Web-based training, FAQs, and an application user guide training. Notices will be sent as materials become available.

If you have questions, contact CEPI at cepi@michigan.gov or 517-335-0505 (select option 3). If you need assistance in understanding the impact of the four-year and five-year graduation rates on your district, contact MDE's Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability at 877-560-8378. As always, thank you for your continued collaboration with CEPI and MDE.

CC: Public School Academy Authorizers
GAD Application Authorized Users
SRSD/UIC Application Authorized Users